



# Successful Start

## Partner Pages

Fall 2006

### Rhode Island Child Care Quality Rating Standards to be Discussed at Sept. Forum

The Rhode Island Quality Rating System Partnership, led by a 30-member Steering Committee and supported by the United Way of Rhode Island, has been working since April 2005 to develop a system to recognize and reward licensed early care and education and after school programs that provide high quality services to children, youth, and families. A Community Forum to discuss draft quality standards will be held on Thursday, September 28, 2006 from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. at the Providence Marriott. ([Successful Start: Goal #6](#))

A Quality Rating System is a method to assess, improve, and communicate the level of quality in early care and education and school-age care settings. This includes DCYF licensed child care centers, DCYF certified family child care homes, RI Department of Education approved preschool and nursery schools, and DCYF licensed after school programs for elementary and middle school age youth. Experience in other states shows that a quality rating system is a proven strategy to systematically improve the quality of care children experience.

According to Leanne Barrett of Rhode Island KIDS COUNT, "Rhode Island's Quality Rating System will improve the quality of care in the state as systems to support, reward, and recognize quality are put in place. The Quality Rating System will strengthen and build on the existing child care licensing and

#### **RI Quality Rating System Anticipated Outcomes**

- \* Increased # of children in higher-quality care
- \* Information readily available to parents
- \* More providers working to improve quality
- \* Improved licensing and monitoring standards
- \* Coordinated system of professional development
- \* Group of providers that meet standards of pre-kindergarten programs
- \* Enhanced school readiness of all children

preschool approval systems, will provide a framework for professional development, and will be a means to track progress toward improving the quality of programs across the state. It will also provide parents and families with much needed information about the quality of their child's care".

A voluntary rating system will be launched in the fall of 2007 and will be open to DCYF licensed child care and RI Department of Education approved preschools. Draft standards for center-based programs, family child care homes, and after school programs are posted (in English and Spanish) on the [RI KIDS COUNT website](#).

For more information on Rhode Island's Child Care Quality Rating System or to register for the September 28<sup>th</sup> Community Forum, contact [Leanne Barrett](#) at (401) 351-9400.

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#### **Successful Start**

##### **Mission Statement**

Successful Start partners will use Rhode Island's Early Childhood Systems Plan to ensure that all young children reach their full potential through a system of services that promotes healthy social-emotional development, quality early care and education, coordinated medical homes, and effective parent education and family support services.

## Watch Me Grow Rhode Island Pilots Screening in Washington County Area

The Successful Start Developmental Screening & Services Project has a new name – Watch Me Grow Rhode Island. After nearly one year of planning, development, and outreach, the project will begin implementation of its model of early childhood screening, referral, and service coordination in Washington County. Key partners in this effort include the RI Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Washington County Coalition for Children. ([Successful Start: Goal #4](#)).

South County Pediatrics and five child care centers are participating in the pilot. South County Pediatrics, located Wakefield, RI is home to four pediatricians. Child care centers participating in the pilot include: Sunshine Early Child Care, A Place To Grow, CANE Child Development Center, Children's Village Oak Harbor, and Growing Children of RI (Narragansett).

Young children will receive developmental and behavioral screening at selected pediatric well child visits and in their child care center. Screening tools that will be used include: PEDS, Ages & Stages, and the Early Childhood Screening Assessment. A community networking meeting to launch the pilot is being scheduled for early November.

For more information on the project, contact [Blythe Berger](#) at (401) 222-5949.

### Data Bytes...

**Rhode Island general pediatricians report the following methods of developmental surveillance:**

**78.2%** Questions/conversation with parents

**48.5%** Surveillance questionnaire/checklist

**21.8%** Standardized screening tool

\*Figures do not equal 100% as more than one answer could be checked.

Source: RI Dept. of Health, RI Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, 2006

## Child Care Support Network Brings Mental Health Consultation to Child Care Providers in Rhode Island

This fall, the Child Care Support Network, through contracts with Bradley Hospital and The Providence Center, will begin offering mental health consultation to child care centers and family child care homes in RI. This work is supported by funds from the Department of Health, Department of Human Services, Successful Start, and the Healthy Tomorrows Program. ([Successful Start: Goal #9](#))

Since 1997, the Child Care Support Network has offered a range training and technical assistance services to child care providers in RI. Over the past year, the program was modified to offer new services that better meet the needs of children and families. The newly designed program includes: mental health consultation, health consultation, and onsite mentoring and technical assistance. Mental health consultation will begin this Fall. Other CCSN components will start early in 2007.

Mental health consultants from Bradley Hospital and The Providence Center will work with child care providers to: evaluate the provider's capacity to promote mental health and effectively address challenging behavior; develop goals and an action plan for improving that capacity; accommodate children with special health care needs and emotional challenges; connect with community resources; and offer focused staff training, behavior modeling, and parent education. Mental health consultants will coordinate their work with other early care initiatives, including KIDS CONNECT, the Positive Educational Partnership Program, and Strengthening Families Through Early Care & Education.

For more information, contact [Melissa Deitrick](#), CCSN Program Manager at (401) 222-4197.



## Prematurity Task Force to Put Forward Strategies for Reducing Premature Births at November Summit

*Contributed by Bill Hollinshead*

At the March of Dimes "Prematurity Summit" in late 2005, Dr. David Gifford, Director of the RI Department of Health, charged us to develop a list of strategic and practical action opportunities that could help to reverse the worsening trends of premature births in Rhode Island. In response, the RI Chapter of the March of Dimes, Women & Infants' Hospital, and the Department of Health have convened a Task Force to develop such options and opportunities for the 2006 Prematurity Summit on November 9, 2006.

Dr. Maureen Phipps, Director of the Center for Excellence in Women's Health at Women & Infants' Hospital has been named Chair of the Task Force. The Task Force includes strong minds and voices from obstetrics, midwifery, health plans, parents, community coalitions, public health, and other stakeholders. Workgroups are reviewing the literature and refining lists of the most promising opportunities in the domains of obstetrical services, prevention of tobacco and substance abuse, pre/interconception care, and the special issues of teen pregnancy. We expect there will be an integrated list of proposals for Dr. Gifford and the other leaders at the Summit in November.

Just as Successful Start promises to deliver six year-olds to Kindergarten healthy and ready to learn, the Prematurity Task Force has plans to deliver us healthy newborns, with healthy parents ready to raise them well!

## Family Outreach Program Evaluation Completed; Contracts Awarded to Local Visiting Nurse Agencies

This month, Family Outreach Program contracts were awarded to the VNA of Care New England, VNS of Newport & Bristol Counties, and VNS Home Health Services. With some modifications (described below), the program will continue to offer risk assessment and referral to families with children ages birth to three who are at-risk for poor developmental outcomes.

Several modifications to the Family Outreach Program were made. Children identified through Newborn Screening as "Risk Positive" will be referred to the program and receive an average of two to three home visits for assessment, parent education, and referral. Follow-up visits will now occur when the infant is 8-10 months old. A provision was added to allow for multiple and enhanced home visits for families at highest risk. Families in Washington County will continue to be served by VNS Home Health Services. The VNA of Care New England will serve Providence County and Kent County. The VNS of Newport & Bristol Counties will provide services in both Newport and Bristol Counties.

In early 2006, an evaluation of the program was completed to inform the development of the new contracts. A major finding of the evaluation is the need for more services for the highest risk families (those with multiple risk factors for poor outcomes). Services for these families could include home visiting that begins prenatally and continues through the first few years of life. Due to limited resources, this level of services is not currently available through the Family Outreach Program. Many early childhood leaders, however, continue to work to expand the capacity of these services in the state.

For questions about the Family Outreach Program, contact [Blythe Berger](#) at (401) 222-5949.

## News in Brief...

The Executive Office of Health & Human Services and Successful Start are working to improve the children's developmental services system in Rhode Island. At the July 2006 Children's Cabinet meeting, recommendations for system improvement and priority areas for action were disseminated. These items will be discussed in detail at a future Children's Cabinet meeting.

Rhode Island was selected to participate in "Setting the Stage for Success", a Commonwealth Fund-supported project that will provide technical assistance to five states to support developmental and behavioral screening in primary care. Marian F. Earls, M.D., and Sherry Hay, M.P.A., of the North Carolina ABCD Initiative will visit Rhode Island on October 19-20. For more details on their visit, contact [Tammy Camillo](#) at (401) 222-4354.

Successful Start was recently featured in the ZERO TO THREE Policy Network e-newsletter, *The Baby Monitor*. This bi-monthly publication features key federal and state policy issues, publications, resources, advocacy tools, and special articles for those interested in impacting public policies for babies and toddlers. Click [here](#) to link to the article, "[State Policy Roundup: Progress on Infant-Toddler Issues Across the United States](#)".

Rhode Island KIDS COUNT released its 2006 Fact Book in April. The Fact Book is an important source of data on children's wellbeing with information presented to help guide community and program planning. The Fact Book is available on the [Rhode Island KIDS COUNT website](#). Order hard copies of the complete Fact Book by calling (401) 351-9400.

## Upcoming Events...

**Rhode Island Child Care Quality Rating System Community Forum.** Opportunity to comment on draft Quality Rating System Program Standards. September 28<sup>th</sup>, 6:00-9:00pm at the Providence Marriott, Orms Street. Contact [Leanne Barrett](#) at (401) 351-9400 for more information.

**RI Association for Infant Mental Health Series in Infant Wellbeing.** *Postpartum Depression: Implications for Infant Mental Health*. Tuesday, October 17<sup>th</sup>; Tuesday, November 28<sup>th</sup>; and Tuesday, December 12<sup>th</sup> from 8:00-10:00am. Pine Room, Bradley Hospital, 1011 Veterans Memorial Parkway, East Providence. For further information call Claudia Yellin at (401) 831-0660 or email [Christine Low](#).

**Setting the Stage for Success: Integrating Developmental Screening and Surveillance in Primary Care Practice.** Presented by Marian F. Earls, M.D., and Sherry Hay, M.P.A., of the North Carolina ABCD Initiative on Friday, October 20<sup>th</sup>, 8:30-9:30am, as part of Hasbro Children's Hospital Pediatric Grand Rounds. Rhode Island Hospital, George Auditorium. Visit the [Brown Medical School](#) website for more information.

### Successful Start

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